

Strategic Plan

Setting a Strategic Direction for the Development of Cultural Tourism

Bloomington Area Cultural Tourism





Setting a Strategic Direction for the Development of Cultural Tourism

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Bloomington Area Cultural Tourism





Overview

In the spring of 2001, Bloomington Mayor John Fernandez launched the Cultural Tourism Initiative to identify strategies to promote cultural tourism as a major economic development strategy in Bloomington and Monroe County. Mayor Fernandez believes local government must take the lead in visioning and creating a community where the opportunity is available to enjoy a good life—that is, a community where businesses want to be, where people want to work and live. A strong, vibrant, growing economy is essential to the long-term prosperity of a community and its citizens, businesses and institutions. A thriving business environment requires cooperative participation from both the public and private sectors. The Cultural Tourism Initiative is a move to realize that vision.

The Cultural Tourism Initiative is firmly based in the long-term planning of the community. In May of 1991, the Planning Department for the City of Bloomington released the *Growth Policies Plan*, a strategy for the growth and development of Bloomington. The Planning Department developed this

strategy using a citizen-driven process that reflected the unique character and vision of the community. In 2001, an update to the *Growth Policies Plan* was released. Again, the community contributed in the process. Key concepts from the plan include maintaining the quality of life and sustaining the cultural vibrancy of the Bloomington area. Cultural tourism is a critical economic strategy that serves these key concepts.

To position Bloomington for pursuing cultural tourism as an important economic development strategy, the Mayor established a

STEERING COMMITTEE

Tom Guevara

Controller's Office, City of Bloomington

Valerie Pena

Executive Director, Monroe County Convention and Visitors Bureau

Patricia Cole

President, City of Bloomington, Common Council

Mick Renneisen

Director, City of Bloomington, Parks and Recreation

Talisha Coppock

Executive Director, Downtown Bloomington Commission

Mark Stoops

Member, Monroe County Council

Sally Gaskill

Executive Director, Bloomington Area Arts Council

Linda Williamson

Executive Director, Bloomington Economic Development Corporation

Brian O'Neill

President, Monroe County Board of Commissioners

Kim Walker

Associate Dean of the Faculty, Indiana University

Michael Wilkerson

Office of Student Development and Diversity, Indiana University

Cultural Tourism Steering Committee to lead the initiative. The steering committee was comprised of representatives from community organizations that would become key partners in implementing a cultural tourism plan in Bloomington and Monroe County. For many of these organizations, the promotion of cultural tourism has already been a key thrust in their respective strategic plans.

Crowe, Chizek and Company LLP was engaged to facilitate the initiative's development and prepare the action plan for implementation. Crowe Chizek is the ninth largest consulting and public accounting firm in the U.S. Crowe Chizek's State and Local Government practice specializes in structuring public financing strategies for municipalities. Dr. B.J. Bischoff, project leader for this initiative, serves as a Director for the Public Sector Services Unit of Crowe, Chizek and Company LLP, working primarily with government and nonprofit organizations. Dr. Bischoff assists organizations through strategic planning, management and leadership development, interpersonal and cross-cultural communications improvement, organizational restructuring, organizational process reviews, public meeting facilitation, large-scale change management, needs assessments, project management and program evaluation. Dr. Bischoff served on the Workforce Development Committee and Small Business Council of the Indiana Chamber of Commerce Board of Directors for eight years. Dr. Bischoff earned her doctorate in Higher Education Administration from Indiana University. She earned her M.S. in College Student Personnel Administra-

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tion and her B.A. in Journalism and Theater from Indiana University.

With the assistance of Crowe Chizek, the steering committee defined the Cultural Tourism Initiative and its goals. Continuing the citizen-driven process employed by the city in planning, the steering committee sought to learn directly from the community what aspects of cultural tourism were most important to the residents of Monroe County and how they would envision the initiative's implementation. Again, a broad spectrum of interest groups was included in the public input sessions to encourage a multifaceted approach. Each input session focused on one of the following aspects of cultural tourism: Business, Food and Lodging; Community-Based Organizations; Natural Resources and Recreation; Performing Arts; and Visual Arts. Seven input sessions were attended by almost 100 residents. Additional input was received via a toll-free number and e-mail. The committee reviewed the public input and developed the goals and strategies contained in this report.

This report is a reflection of the needs of a community and a strategy to meet those needs. The goals and strategies demonstrate the close fit with the economic development vision of the community, its mayor, and its leaders.

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Cultural Tourism?

Definition

What is cultural tourism? It is the exploration and promotion of a locale's arts, culture, heritage, environment and history. The experience can include a mosaic of people, traditions, art forms and celebrations that combine to reflect the diversity and unique character of the place. The composition of a cultural tourism initiative includes the fine or folk art of a community, as well as sporting events and natural resources of an area.

Cultural tourism applies the principles and strategies of the tourism industry to emphasize a community or region's unique characteristics. It is a strategy that captures the cultural vibrancy of an area and provides an infrastructure that channels this vibrancy into economic prosperity.

Cultural Tourism Investments

The National Governor's Association reports that the arts are emerging as a potent force in the economic life of cities and rural areas nationwide and

assuming an important role as a direct and indirect contributor to state economies. Reports from states across the nation indicate the arts' substantial impact. For example:

- The arts generated \$849 million in revenue for Virginia businesses, provided 18,850 full- and part-time jobs, and produced \$307 million in value-added income for Virginia's workforce and entrepreneurs.
- Every dollar Michigan invests in the State's Council for Arts and Cultural Affairs results in \$10 of in-state direct spending.
- Oregon is home to 441 nonprofit arts and cultural institutions that injected \$100.2 million of direct spending in the state's economy in fiscal 2000. Oregon's non-profit arts sector employed 3,623 individuals.¹



Cultural Tourism and the Arts

Throughout the United States, communities are developing strategies to emphasize and share their community's arts culture with others. Once-latent artistic and cultural resources in rural communities and regions have grown into thriving tourism and cultural destinations.

- HandMade in America, a non-profit organization in rural western North Carolina, promotes the fine craft of

handmade objects as a strategy to spur economic contributions of \$122 million annually to the state's economy.²

- With support from the National Endowment of the Arts, Elko,

Nevada has become a center for poetry. Folklorists began collecting the stories and poems of cowboy poets. The Cowboy Poetry Gathering began in 1985 and currently attracts 8,000 visitors and contributes \$6 million dollars to Elko's economy.³

- In June 2001, The City of Indianapolis released *The Indianapolis Cultural Development Initiative: Building Participation Through Cultural Tourism*. The city has budgeted \$10 million, or \$2 million each year for the next five years. Half of the funding will come from Lilly Endowment, while the other half will come from an allocation from

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the Marion County Capital Improvement Board. The Commission on Cultural Development was formed to head the initiative that will focus on making Indianapolis a cultural destination. The Indianapolis plan focuses on cultural districts, public art projects, transportation and other infrastructure issues. The plan will provide grant programs to spur essential cultural development, cultural and hospitality industry partnerships, neighborhood enhancement, public art installations, technology and systems for servicing prospective visitors as well as local audience development and advertising.⁴

- Currently underway is a new national study in over 75 communities, *Arts and Economic Prosperity*, designed to measure the economic impact that the nonprofit arts industry has on the economy. The Bloomington Area Arts Council and the City of Bloomington are partnering as participants in this study to identify the measurable and direct impact that Bloomington's nonprofit arts organizations have on the local economy.

Educational Outreach

A key component in the promotion of a community's culture is outreach. Most organizations involved in cultural

tourism include outreach in their strategic missions. Some cultural organizations exist solely for the purpose of educational outreach. Instead of just inviting people to attend their programs or participate in their offerings, cultural organizations offer educational opportunities for people to learn about a specific aspect of the culture. Oftentimes, there is no charge for these outreach services, as they are core to an organization's mission. An emphasis on outreach is critical to creating future audiences and an economic climate conducive to support of cultural initiatives.

The impact of the development of arts and cultural tourism is not limited to economic growth. The State of Virginia, in a study of the economic impact of arts and cultural organizations in Virginia, documented the effect of *outreach*. *Outreach* refers to efforts such as school programs and public seminars. Over 5.8 million people, representing 19 percent of all visitor contacts, were affected by their outreach initiatives. The impact on the quality of life and education throughout the state cannot easily be measured, but this does not diminish its importance, and its contribution to the life and development of children and adults.⁵

Cultural Tourism and Sports

Sports, as an element of a region's culture, is a core component of cultural tourism. The use of sport and recreation as a tourist initiative emerged during the eighties and nineties. According to the Sports Tourism International Council, this interaction

between sport and tourism will continue to grow. Communities are including sports as part of their economic development plans, and as a strategy to promote domestic, national, and international friendship and understanding among people.

Bloomington and Monroe County offer a wide range of sports offerings. Indiana University sporting events contribute the best in Big Ten sports including football, basketball, swimming, track and field, and wrestling. Indiana ranks second in the nation for the percentage of sports event visitors⁶. Bloomington was the first city in Indiana to embrace soccer, and will engender many new trends in sports and recreation in the future.



Monroe County's reputation as a softball, basketball and soccer destination contributes to the economic fabric on a national, regional, and state level.

Cultural Tourism and Recreation

Midwest Living Magazine, December 2000 stated, "Nature creates her own masterpiece in the rural countryside of South Central Indiana, which has inspired painters for nearly a century." Cultural tourism values the natural resources of an area, sharing and protecting its treasure.

Allying cultural tourism with recreation will impact the area's

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economy. This impact should not be understated. According to the Niche Analysis Report⁷, Indiana travelers spend \$947 million annually on outdoor recreation.

Cultural Tourism in Bloomington, Monroe County and Indiana University

Bloomington and the Monroe County area are a unique confluence of a wealth of natural resources, thriving fine arts and sports offerings, plus diverse religious and cultural entities. The cultural richness of Indiana University provides a strong foundation for cultural tourism to thrive in the Bloomington Area. Indiana University is internationally recognized for its strong arts-based programs and facilities, while offering robust athletic and historic traditions. Indiana University is home to artists of all

fields, young people who will set the pace of American Culture in the future. All of this is available to residents and visitors in a Hoosier, small town setting. Proud of the achievements of its residents, the marriage of culture and tourism is a natural step, building

on the values of the community to help assure its economic prosperity.

There are the highest caliber resources from which to develop a cultural tourism component in Monroe County.

- Indiana University offers first-class facilities for the public to enjoy the performing arts, including the Musical Arts Center and two new stages in the state-of-the-art Theater & Drama Center that present dozens of productions every year. It also hosts the Metz Theater, perhaps the finest experimental theater of its kind in the nation.
- The Indiana University Auditorium hosts professional Broadway plays, musicals, ballets, and nationally and internationally known entertainers.
- The Buskirk-Chumley Theatre is a historic, beautiful, 600-seat community performing arts center presenting a variety of plays, concerts, and other public programs by local, regional and national artists.



• The Indiana University Art Museum is ranked among the nation's best, with works ranging from artifacts of the ancient world to paintings by Picasso and Monet.

- Local galleries and the John Waldron Arts Center host exhibitions, art classes and community theater throughout the year.
- The Lilly Library contains more than seven million items, including such rare books as the Gutenberg Bible, the Coverdale Bible of 1535, the four Shakespeare folios, and

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What Visitors Enjoy in Indiana

Activity	Percentage of travelers participating
Scenic Beauty	76%
Small, Quaint Towns	63%
Scenic/Driving Tours	58%
Historic Exploration	51%
Lakes/Rivers/Natural	47%
State Parks	42%
Fairs & Festivals	34%
Hiking/Biking	25%
Art/Cultural Museums	18%
Outdoor Adventure	18%
Camping	18%
Sports Events	13%
Performing Arts	11%

Table 1
*2000 Annual Report to Governor O'Bannon:
Indiana Tourism Council*

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Bloomington/Monroe County Tourism And Travel Industry Economic Impact - 2000

Total Expenditures	\$226,468,288
Direct Expenditures	\$151,433,158
Indirect Expenditures	\$ 75,035,130
Total Wages	\$ 51,215,774
Total Taxes	\$ 56,415,879
State	\$ 19,590,795
Local	\$ 10,556,628
Federal	\$ 26,268,456
Total Employment	3,765
Jobs (Direct Expenditures)	2,817
Jobs (Indirect Expenditures)	948

Table 2: Economic Impact of Bloomington/Monroe County Tourism and Travel Industry - 2000

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John James Audubon's "Birds of America" plates.

- Every year, the Indiana University School of Music hosts more than 1,000 performances by the world's leading musicians and the school's outstanding faculty, students and performing groups.
- Indiana University hosts the only international harp competition in the world.
- The Kalachakra Initiation – a peace conference with world spiritual leaders such as the Dalai Lama that has encouraged the development of the nation's only Tibetan chortan, a second monastery, and two authentic Tibetan restaurants.
- The Lotus World Music and Arts Festival creates opportunities to experience and celebrate the diversity of the world's cultures. Concerts and interactive workshops are scheduled throughout the year.
- Limestone Sculpture Symposium – a demonstration of the versatility of Indiana limestone as a



sculptural medium. Carvers from across the world come together to share ideas and technical information. The symposium is open to all levels of carvers—from the beginner to the professional.

- Mountain biking is available in the Wapehani Mountain Bike Park, with trails winding through 33 acres of scenic wooded areas, fields and lakeshores.
- The Hoosier National Forest has trails for hiking and horseback riding, and opportunities for camping, fishing and hunting.
- Within Bloomington's city limits, there are 26 parks and 2200 acres for picnicking and recreation. There are three public swimming pools, baseball and softball diamonds, three public golf courses and an ice skating rink.
- Monroe County has a wealth of natural resources including three lakes, world class hiking trails and other nature activities.
- Recent development of "rails to trails corridors" and the large amount of open land in Monroe County suggests that further acquisition of corridors and key pieces of open land could result in a comprehensive linkage of trails and nature preserves.

With this list of events, activities and organizations, tourism already contributes to the economic prosperity



of Monroe County (See Table 2). The tourism and travel industry contributed over \$226.5 million to Monroe County's economy in 2000. Direct expenditures by tourists accounted for \$151.4 million of this total. Residents of Monroe County spent an additional \$32.3 million with the local tourism industry. This direct spending created 601 jobs.⁸

Each year, visitors frequently come to the Bloomington Area from Indiana, Illinois, Wisconsin, and Kentucky. The submarket for visitors includes Indianapolis, IN, Lafayette, IN, Chicago, IL, Milwaukee, WI, Cincinnati, OH, and Louisville, KY. When people come to visit the Bloomington Area, they

primarily come for short visits of one to three nights or for a day trip. While in the area, travelers most frequently visited the following attractions:

- Indiana University
- Oliver Winery
- Lake Monroe
- Downtown Bloomington
- Nashville/Brown County⁹

Bloomington and Monroe County face the challenge of efficiently and effectively employing the wealth of resources and offering these visitors reasons for longer stays and more frequent returns. By thoughtfully and imaginatively using the area's arts resources, sports and recreation, festivals and history to attract additional tourism to the area, tourism's impact can be increased. Visitors will be more likely to extend their visits for a wider exploration of Bloomington.

Ancillary facilities such as restaurants,

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hotels, and the services will grow proportionately. Cultural facilities and events enhance property values, tax resources and overall profitability for communities. Additionally, cultural opportunities will be more accessible to residents. A strategic plan for cultural tourism that is based on sound economic development principles, promotion of tourism, and other local initiatives currently underway will drive the initiative to meet this challenge.

The Challenge

The steering committee for the Cultural Tourism Initiative asked local residents to identify challenges that would need to be addressed to enable cultural tourism to be a driving force in the local economy. The following common themes emerged from this effort:

- **Limited facilities for performances, exhibitions, meetings, and overnight accommodations**—Some existing facilities are underutilized, while some types of needed facilities are nonexistent. The community should inventory its existing facilities, determine future facilities needed to promote a cultural tourism initiative, and develop a plan to obtain and fund needed facilities.
- **Lack of coordination of public facilities**—It would be helpful for cultural organizations if a single source existed to schedule

the coordination and usage of all public facilities throughout the county. This would maximize facilities usage and track the community's facilities needs in its entirety.

- **Inadequate public transportation to support cultural tourism**—If it were simple to travel easily between downtown Bloomington and the Indiana University



campus, and between Bloomington and the rest of Monroe County, more visitors and residents would participate in cultural tourism-related activities.

- **No mechanism to schedule and plan events**—A centralized service should exist to assist cultural organizations in scheduling their events at times that do not conflict with other scheduled events or that would dovetail well with the events of other cultural organizations. It would also be advantageous if organizations could receive assistance for planning events and promotional cam-

paigns.

- **No central clearinghouse for cultural event information**—County residents, visitors, and representatives from cultural tourism-related organizations alike would benefit from having a one-stop place for information regarding all cultural events scheduled on any given day throughout the county.

- **Businesses are “tapped out” in supporting multiple organizations and agencies**—Corporate contributions to cultural organizations could potentially be streamlined if there was one recipient fund that would then channel the contributions to the designated organizations.

- **Lack of communication among organizations and agencies**—The need identified most frequently by culture-related community members was the need for increased communication among cultural tourism-related organizations and individuals. It would be helpful for one organization to take responsibility for facilitating multiple types of communication with and among organizations across all disciplines, including sports and recreation. Cultural tourism could be enhanced by the synergies that would evolve from increased communication and collaboration throughout the cultural community.
- **Small cultural entities cannot**

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afford expensive marketing to increase their visibility and sales—Funding for a cultural tourism initiative could be used to help fund marketing activities within individual organizations. In addition, promotion of an overall cultural tourism campaign would benefit the entire cultural community. If cultural organizations and individuals, the *cultural product*, cannot sustain themselves, then cultural tourism cannot exist as a viable economic development strategy.

- **Lack of new or planned tourist attractions to retain the interest of return visitors**—Indiana University alumni form a large group of prospective visitors, but if they perceive that there is nothing new for them to do, they will not consider returning. Likewise, when people do visit the Bloomington Area, there should be a menu of activities available for them, based on their personal interests.
- **Turf issues between Indiana University and the Bloomington Area**—Better communication between the university and the community would enable shared human resources, shared facilities, common funding and a seamless



offering of cultural activities to the Bloomington Area visitor and resident. Since the community and the university are inextricably tied to each other, it makes sense to promote cultural tourism as a combined community-university partnership.

- **Long term sustainability of the initiative**—

Funding needs to be identified that will enable a cultural tourism initiative to flourish. Whether it be public financing, dedicated budgets from existing government agencies or private contributions, it is critical that the funding streams be identified and leveraged.

- **Growth and development should not detract from Bloomington's quality of life**—It is important to community residents that the promotion of the cultural aspects of the Bloomington Area will not cause the charm of the community and



the reasons why it is a cultural destination to disappear.

The Benefits

Bloomington and Monroe County can benefit from addressing these challenges. These benefits can be aligned with the planning already voiced by the community in the *Growth Policies Plan* for the City of Bloomington.

- **Compact Urban Form** – By preparing a strategic plan and collaborating with the Bloomington Economic Development Corporation, the Chamber of Commerce and other agencies, cultural tourism can help to support new development in underused facilities and work to improve all areas of the community.
 - **Nurture Environmental Integrity** – Cultural tourism respects and supports the environmental integrity of the area. As a benefit, the plan could accommodate the preservation of environmental integrity through efficient use of resources, celebration of natural resources, and strategic planning of events that impact the environment.
 - **Leverage Public Capital** – By researching and developing resources to support the initiative, cultural tourism will increase revenues throughout the area. Strategic Use of designated funds for cultural improvements will
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enable a cultural tourism initiative to become self-sustaining.

- **Mitigate Traffic** – It is clear that community residents do not want the area inundated with an influx of visitors. Rather, the plan calls for respecting the volume of traffic that sites and facilities can accommodate without damage or stress to the environment. A plan for cultural tourism will also drive a strategy for enhanced public transportation.
- **Conserve Community Character** – At the core of cultural tourism is the idea that the community character is to be treasured, explored, and shared. By investing in the cultural entities that define the community's character, the Bloomington Area community can actively preserve its character.
- **Sustain Economic and Cultural Vibrancy** – Cultural tourism by its nature implies a cultural vibrancy. The investment of the community into its cultural roots will stimulate economic growth.
- **Advance Communication and Coordination** – Through the use of web sites, telecommunications, and publications, the cultural tourism initiative has the potential to provide the infrastructure for future communication efforts. By initiating a brand and a model for coordina-

tion, the city and county will more efficiently assimilate new initiatives.¹⁰

Cultural tourism is a vital economic development strategy and the Mayor's Office is committed to supporting the culture of Bloomington and the surrounding area, as well as promoting access to its many cultural assets for both residents and visitors.



The Mission for Cultural Tourism

The mission of the Bloomington Area Cultural Tourism Initiative is to improve the quality of life for residents and visitors to Monroe County through the support and coordination of cultural tourism as an economic

development tool. The Initiative seeks to uncover and support the cultural assets of the Bloomington Area, whether they are associated with the arts, nature, recreation, academia, spirituality or the diverse cultures present throughout the region. As a result, our increasingly service and amenities-based economy will be supported and stimulated through this initiative. A stronger cultural infrastructure will also strengthen the economy by attracting new employers and retaining existing ones.

Goals Summary

The Bloomington Area Cultural Tourism Initiative has three primary goals for implementation of the mission. Each goal has related sets of strategies and action steps.

1. Establish a solid cultural tourism infrastructure.
2. Establish cultural tourism as a key economic development strategy for the Bloomington Area.
3. Establish the Bloomington Area as a cultural destination.

Timeline

This initiative is envisioned as a multi-year plan. Some actions will be implemented on a rapid timeline, but then require a long-term commitment to be successful. Other actions will develop over a five-year period through a series of carefully planned steps.





Strategic Plan for Cultural Tourism

GOAL ONE

Establish a solid cultural tourism infrastructure

The long-term success of the Bloomington Area Cultural Tourism Initiative will rely upon a solid infrastructure. The elements of that infrastructure will ensure that the initiative continues to support the cultural institutions of the Bloomington Area for future generations. The infrastructure will consist of four major elements: (A) a Cultural Development Board; (B) sustainable funding; (C) structured operational processes, and (D) support for the Monroe County Convention and Visitors Bureau's web site and toll free number.

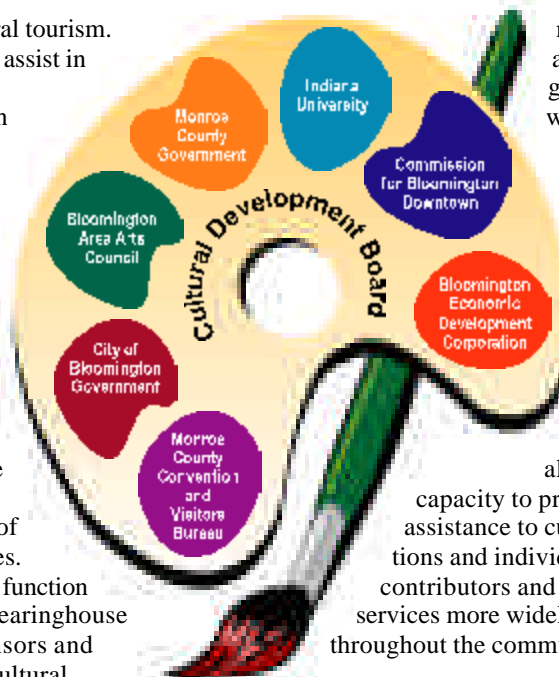
A. Establish the Cultural Development Board (CDB)

Establishing the Cultural Development Board (CDB) is a high priority action of this initiative. Functions of the CDB include developing ongoing dedicated resources (financial and in-

kind) to cultural tourism. The CDB will assist in creating and maintaining an infrastructure that supports entities in planning and coordination of cultural events and offerings. It will encourage the start-up or development of cultural entities. The CDB will function as a central clearinghouse between sponsors and providers of cultural activities and events.

The CDB will identify funding sources for facilities development. It will work closely with local government entities to determine the most appropriate strategy to accomplish facility development. Facility development will not be restricted to identifying and developing expanded, existing facilities or new facilities. Facilities development will also focus on planning and recommending publicly funded incentive strategies that enable both commercial and not-for-profit entities to establish culturally-based businesses that enhance the cultural quality of life for visitors and residents of the community.

The CDB will also provide technical assistance to cultural entities, such as training in money management, audience development, marketing and operational develop-



ment. Technical assistance with grant proposal writing will also be available. In addition, the CDB will identify existing cultural and educational organizations, such as the BAAC, that already have the capacity to provide technical assistance to cultural organizations and individual cultural contributors and make those services more widely available throughout the community.

Action items

1. Gain executive support and commitment to the Cultural Tourism Initiative through the presentation of the strategic plan to local government officials, Indiana University executives, local business leaders, cultural and economic development organizations, and other community-based organizations. Continue to keep these key stakeholders engaged and informed as the Cultural Tourism Initiative unfolds and gains momentum.
2. Select board members for the Cultural Development Board. Members of the Cultural Development Board (CDB) will include a representative membership of public agencies, cultural and economic development organizations, and their designees who will be responsible for contributing, developing, and creating sources of funding for the cultural tourism infrastructure.

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3. *Hire an executive director and support staff for the CDB. The executive director will report to the Board and be responsible for the implementation of the Cultural Tourism Initiative.*

B. Identify funding streams to sustain the Cultural Tourism Initiative

For the Cultural Tourism Initiative to flourish as a key component of the Bloomington Area's economic development strategy, dedicated funding must be identified and leveraged. The Initiative's partnering organizations and other stakeholder groups will have the opportunity to jointly determine current and future funding opportunities.

Action items

1. *Explore pooled funding options. Explore the development of a centralized funding method for businesses and individuals to make financial and in-kind contributions through one source to benefit the myriad of cultural organizations. Likewise, this pooled funding option would provide a centralized resource for cultural organizations to request financial assistance. Pooling funds would also relieve contributors of the burden of deciding whether to grant or deny assistance to organizations requesting individual assistance. The CDB, with its partners and advisors, would approve assistance to cultural organizations and coordinate funding to allow a broad strengthening of cultural entities.*
2. *Provide assistance to individuals, businesses, and foundations wishing to continue making financial contributions to individual cultural organizations. The CDB could provide services to*

donors, ranging from tax benefit information to matching donor objectives with a specific cultural organization's mission.

3. *Identify prospective foundation and private funding sources which have traditionally funded community-based cultural initiatives and aggressively seek that funding. Explore grants opportunities from organizations such as Lilly Endowment, which committed \$5 million to the Indianapolis Cultural Development Initiative, the National Endowment for the Arts, and the Indiana Humanities Council. The CDB would help to match grant opportunities with appropriate individuals and organizations, assist with grant writing, and research available grants.*
4. *Identify and obtain local, state and federal government funding to assist with facilities and capital improvements.*
5. *Ensure that funds designated for public art from local capital projects are earmarked and utilized.*

C. Establish operating processes

Establishing well-conceived processes for managing day-to-day operations of the Cultural Tourism Initiative will be key to the effectiveness of the CDB. Processes will be established to support sound governance, financial management, contracting and personnel issues.

Action items

- Develop procedures and processes for how the CDB will function. Specify what activities are within the scope of the CDB's mission. Establish governance standards and procedures for how the CDB will operate.*
1. *Develop processes for funds management and reporting. Determine how funds will be maintained. Establish disbursement and receiving procedures.*
 2. *Establish written guidelines and processes to enable procurement and*

vendor management. Processes will include, but are not limited to, selection guidelines, time requirements and performance standards.

D. Support the Monroe County Convention and Visitors Bureau's (CVB) centralized, electronic interactive public access to cultural information

Maintaining a web site is a high priority component of the infrastructure for the Cultural Tourism Initiative. The Internet is a tool that is highly visible with the potential for broad reaching results. As a result, the CVB has already begun the process of creating centralized, electronic interactive public access to cultural information. CVB's existing web site will be a central clearinghouse that includes event and attraction information and links to partner organizations. A comprehensive central calendar will be maintained by CVB, using links, as appropriate, to facilitate maintenance. It will function as a centralized ticketing service with kiosks for public access. This web site will be a gateway or access point with links to other related Bloomington Area cultural web sites. Using a web site to interact with residents and visitors offers enormous flexibility and connectivity. It is a way to establish an image and simultaneously function as a gateway to the heart of the Bloomington Area. The advantages of making the support of CVB's web site a high priority component in implementing a cultural tourism strategy include the following:

- Providing one stop access to local information – links for residents can be established as easily as links for visitors. (continued on page 14)

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- Moving common transactions on line – services such as ticket sales and reservations can be managed electronically.
- Opening up closed or unknown services – residents can find quick access to business, recreation, and cultural activities. Visitors can discover multiple activities, encourage them to extend visits or return for future visits.
- Web sites are fast and immediate – information can be gained quickly.

Supporting the CVB's existing toll-free number with an automated message and caller options is another important public access point in the Cultural Tourism Initiative. People will call the number to find up-to-date information on upcoming events and activities in the Bloomington Area. The phone line will create an alternative to the web site, yet still be an effective one-stop, easy access point for visitors and residents.

Action items

1. *The CDB will assist the CVB to identify web sites and toll free lines of partner organizations. There are multiple web sites focused on individual needs of cultural, governmental, and economic development organizations in Bloomington and Monroe County. Linking existing web sites allows the partner organization to remain responsible for the content of their own web sites, rather than the CDB the CVB.*
2. *The CDB will actively commit to support the maintenance of the CVB's web site and phone line.*
3. *The CDB will work with the CVB to define policies and procedures for*

administration of the web site and phone line to allow individuals and groups to maintain their calendars and their organization's information.

4. *The CDB will work closely with cultural partners to assist the CVB in maintaining centralized, electronic interactive public access to cultural information. The CDB's Executive Director will provide assistance to support the CVB in continuously tracking web site and phone line usage, updating content, determining innovative uses for disseminating cultural information via the web site and phone line, and provide feedback to partner organizations on web site and phone line value.*

GOAL TWO

Establish cultural tourism as a key economic development strategy

Making cultural tourism a key economic development strategy will integrate the initiative as a core component of the community's future. The five elements required to implement this goal include (A) partnering with businesses; (B) stimulating the local economy by investing in the arts, individuals who create the community's cultural climate, and culturally based entities and organizations; (C) addressing barriers; (D) coordinating and developing facilities; and (E) and promoting coordination among stakeholders.



A. Partner with businesses

Since the development of cultural tourism is an economic development initiative, it is critical that area businesses play a key role in implementation. The CDB will work with the local business community to take the following steps:

1. Establish a close alliance with the Bloomington Economic Development Corporation (BEDC) as a first step in partnering with business.

Work with the BEDC and business

partners to identify and develop elements of the Bloomington Area that enhance the quality of life of its residents. A rich cultural environment will provide an enticing community for business recruitment and retention of a high quality workforce. Planning that's closely linked with the objectives of the Tourism, Arts and Recreation Roundtable of the BEDC will help to provide consistent goals for the community, further the credibility of the Cultural Tourism Initiative, and facilitate communication

with business partners.

2. Provide technical assistance to small, arts-based businesses to improve their long-term economic vitality and sustainability. Technical assistance could be in the areas of grant proposal writing, resource and referral to other organizations that can assist with business and marketing processes, among others.
3. Partner with the hospitality

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industry to provide for its personnel training and education on the cultural aspects of the community and the role of hospitality personnel in improving economic development through the promotion of cultural tourism.

4. Partner with appropriate agencies that plan for corridors, districts, and zoning considerations that enhance the economic development impact of cultural tourism.
5. Coordinate with local transportation services to provide art routes that would link cultural destinations and improve access to cultural destinations.



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B. Stimulate the economy by investing in the arts, in the individuals who create the community's cultural climate, and in culturally-based entities and organizations

The economic success of the businesses of local artists and other individuals who create the community's cultural climate is vital to the success of the Cultural Tourism Initiative. To assure this success, the CDB will do the following:

1. Enhance effective utilization and financing of arts-related performance, rehearsal, studio and exhibit facilities.
2. Partner with BAAC, Indiana University and other partners to identify sustainable funding sources for the artists and other individuals whose livelihoods are to create the local cultural climate.
3. Coordinate initiatives involving partnerships and collaborative ventures between individual cultural contributors and partnering organizations. Oversee funds disbursed from public and private sources to support the viability of arts, tourism, recreation and other cultural initiatives.
4. Measure results of the Cultural Tourism Initiative by developing an economic impact model to identify revenue generated by cultural tourism. Use information obtained through this model to build a case for the continuity of the Cultural Tourism Initiative.
5. Leverage tax incentives and existing ordinances affecting

facilities, operating expenses, and public art initiatives to promote a community climate conducive to economic development through cultural tourism.

C. Address current facilities for convening space

Current venues for indoor performances and gatherings range in seating capacity from 250 (John Waldron Arts Center) to 600 (Buskirk Chumley) to 3,400 (I.U. Auditorium) to 17,000 (Assembly Hall). The Musical Arts Center at I.U. seats 1,400, but is limited in its availability to the entire community. There is no facility for intermediate indoor seating. There are no facilities for outdoor performances. The Indiana University's Creative Arts Auditorium is currently closed and in need of renovation, and some existing performance venues require better acoustics. To ensure that the Bloomington Area has adequate facilities to accommodate cultural tourism, the CDB will take the following actions:

1. Examine current usage and capacity of existing facilities to identify needs and gaps in providing venues for groups of all sizes and purposes.
2. Develop strategies to create community partnerships resulting in more fully utilizing existing space that is inaccessible to the entire community.
3. Develop strategies for finding funding sources to build new facilities, and to maintain and improve existing facilities.
4. Create a ten year meeting space needs plan.
5. Enhance the usage of cultural facilities.

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D. Address barriers to participation in cultural tourism activities

The CDB will need to work diligently with partnering organizations to remove barriers to the development of cultural tourism. Some of the actions that the CDB will need to take include the following:

1. Address transportation limitations. An increase of visitors could quickly cause congestion and undermine the initiative. The CDB will work with city and county officials to identify public transportation issues and plan effective traffic routes. The CDB will evaluate several transportation alternatives, such as (1) making the city more pedestrian/bike friendly; (2) establishing a trolley service between Indiana University and the surrounding Bloomington community; (3) examining regional transportation needs and opportunities between regional metropolitan centers and Bloomington/Monroe County.
2. Examine the costs of cultural events and activities. With Monroe County ranked 61st of 92 counties in median income in Indiana¹¹, most families live with an income that does not afford participation in cultural events that are costly. To serve both county residents and visitors of varying income levels effectively, the CDB will develop strategies for promoting a balanced array of cultural activities and events for residents and visitors of all income levels.

E: Promote coordination of activities and events across organizations to maximize impact

Coordination of activities and events and communication across organizations is a high priority in the Cultural Tourism Initiative. Residents report instances of lost opportunities. For example, Indiana University houses many cultural events and opportunities. Many of these offerings are free and open to the public. However, if local residents do not know of a scheduled recital or art show at the university, they obviously will not attend. Likewise, visitors to I.U. would have access to information about community events and festivals. With planning and assistance, festivals, activities, and other events could be coordinated to encourage visitors and residents to plan for participation in multiple events, extend their visits and, thereby, bolster the economy. By coordinating communications, struggling organizations could “piggyback” on larger events, taking advantage of the influx of visitors to promote their product or activity. The CDB could take the following steps to promote coordinated cultural activities:

1. Establish communication methods that link cultural organizations and leaders with the public.
2. Promote continued collaboration among cultural organizations and other partners.
3. Facilitate strategic alliances between similar or complementary cultural entities.
4. Actively support the CVB’s activities in maintaining a centralized cultural calendar.

5. Actively support the activities of the BAAC to strengthen cultural organizations and individual artists.

GOAL THREE

Establish the Bloomington Area as a cultural destination

Bloomington is already known as an attraction for sports lovers and academics. The Cultural Tourism Initiative will mark Bloomington and Monroe County as a cultural destination in key markets throughout the Midwest. Focusing on the following four objectives will make Bloomington and Monroe County a cultural destination.

A. “Brand” the Bloomington Area

Branding is a recognizable symbol of an organization or corporation’s identity. It can include logos or jingles that represent an overall stylistic character. Branding is not a new concept to Bloomington. A local example of branding is the Bloomington Economic Development Corporation’s recently released *Urban Amenities without Big City Hassles*. As a component of the Cultural Tourism Initiative, the CDB will work with existing entities in the development of a brand for Bloomington and Monroe County as an excellent destination for businesses and permanent residency. The CDB will take the following steps in branding the Bloomington Area:

1. Write and release a request for proposals to engage a marketing
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- firm. Select a marketing firm which can develop a brand and marketing plan unique to the Bloomington Area.
2. Identify the unique assets and events in Bloomington and Monroe County upon which to base the brand. Include assets such as the environment; recreation; cultural education; education; a small town setting with access to Indianapolis; unique heritage and history.
3. Develop a marketing plan to use the brand on television, in print and on the radio.

B. Establish cultural tourism routes

Developing cultural tourism routes is another step towards making Bloomington/Monroe County Area a cultural destination. Cultural tourism routes will be defined and publicized on three levels: routes within the City of Bloomington, routes within Monroe County, and routes on a regional level. Routes within Bloomington include tours such as museum tours and tours connected with Indiana University. Monroe County routes include sporting tours or routes that include Bloomington sites, I.U. sites, and various recreational settings. Regional routes will begin south in Columbus and Nashville, Indiana, and extend into Indianapolis. In the future, routes will continue north through Muncie and the Ball State Campus area – making Bloomington the anchor of a Central Indiana cultural tourism route. The

CDB will facilitate the following action items:

1. Identify specific local partnerships for routes. Identify existing routes within Bloomington and Monroe County and develop new routes and partnerships.
2. Tie into Indianapolis' Cultural Development Initiative. Partner with Indianapolis to develop a cultural tourism route. Work with Indianapolis to market packages that include events and destinations between both cities and expand the potential of both markets.
3. Develop regional routes. Design regional tourism routes to include a sports route of various halls of fame, and collegiate, amateur and professional sports offerings. Other routes could include museum routes connecting museums throughout central Indiana and musical routes of both classical and folk music.

The State of Kentucky is an example of a successful regional tourism route. The Kentucky Arts Council and eight counties along Route 23 are working together to create a route based on its musical heritage. Plans are underway to create a web site and arts marketing network along the corridor, a video highlighting each county and an audio driving tour.¹²
4. Implement one or two joint pilot ventures with other destinations in the area, such as Nashville and Columbus, Indiana.
5. Post signs and develop maps that mark routes. By taking the initiative and setting branding standards, Bloomington can lead

the way and set its brand as the hub for regional tourism.

6. Work closely with the Convention and Visitors Bureau and the City to leverage resources with Bloomington's *Wayfinder Project*. Put maps, as they are developed, on the web site to be downloaded.

C. Support agencies and organizations in the coordination, planning and timing of festivals and special events

The CDB will provide the infrastructure that will support coordination, planning and timing of festivals and special events. More coordinated event planning will result in the Convention and Visitors Bureau being able to create carefully targeted tourism packages. The CDB will take the following actions to support community-wide cultural coordination:

1. Coordinate with the CVB to identify facility needs for festival planners. Support the work of the CVB with the use of the web site and telephone line to provide assistance to festival planners on logistics, preparations, permits and other operational details.
2. Coordinate the community branding initiative with the CVB's marketing to promote more effective advertising, reduce redundancies, and leverage resources.
3. Collaborate with Indiana University and the CVB, enabling communication among organizations and services to develop packages and facilitate cultural tourism marketing.

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D. Expand existing and develop new cultural attractions, programs and festivals

Bloomington and Monroe County have the talent pool and natural resources to develop new attractions, programs and festivals. Ideas include the development and expansion of Wonder Lab, analysis of the feasibility of Quarry Stone Park into a public attraction, initiation of public art programs, and the development of new and existing festivals. The CDB could facilitate the following initiatives:

1. Develop and expand Wonder Lab. Identify strategies for the long-term support and maintenance of Wonder Lab as it provides science and technology exploration to the youth of the community and visitors.
2. Develop permanent Public Art programs. Public Art programs have grown in favor throughout the United States. For example, Chicago's *Cows on Parade* enchanted citizens and visitors alike, providing art in an unconventional, yet accessible format. And for decades, the Calder sculpture in front of the Indiana University Musical Arts Center has contributed to Bloomington's cultural landscape. Public art engages people in unusual settings, stimulates creativity and stretches imaginations. It puts artists' work in contact with the public, literally people on the street. For many people, public art is their first contact with a resident artist's work.

This introduction can lead to participation in more formal art exhibitions and cultural events, removing barriers of intimidation or ignorance.

The impact of public art is not limited to an individual level. Public art can help to set the tone of a community. It displays in a very tangible way a community's rich diversity and resource. Through public art, groups and individuals can actively define their community's image.

3. Analyze the feasibility of the development of Quarry Stone Park into a public attraction with activities for people of all ages. Include in the site botanical gardens, a stage for plays and musical performance, educational opportunities to view a working quarry, and swimming and recreational facilities. Connect the development of Quarry Stone Park with the BAAC's existing Limestone Sculpture Symposium.
4. Promote existing festivals and develop new festivals that highlight the area's unique population groups. Bloomington's diverse religious groups, musical resources, drama groups, writer populations, academia, and other groups offer a rich pool from which festivals and celebrations could be shared. Better collaboration and coordination of sponsorship, venues, and logistical resources through the permanent infrastructure support mechanism of the CDB will launch festivals into a significant economic development force.
5. Partner with Bloomington Parks and Recreation to enhance cultural initiatives promoting natural resources and recreational opportunities.



Conclusion

The arts and culture of a community directly affect location preferences of highly mobile knowledge-workers who form the intellectual backbone of the new economy. These workers select "quality of place" above nearly all other factors – including job market conditions – in choosing where to locate. According to Professor Richard Florida of Carnegie Mellon University, four factors determine quality of place: lifestyle, environmental quality, a vibrant music and arts scene, and natural and outdoor amenities. The development of the arts and culture of an area may lead to new economic growth.¹³

Monroe County, Indiana has quality of place. With this strategic plan for cultural tourism, the community can unite to insure the continuance of a unique, high-quality lifestyle.

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Endnotes

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